

The first convert from the region of the upper Nile (modern Sudan) was the eunuch treasurer in the court of Queen Candace (Acts 8:26-40) around A.D. 37. In the sixth century, Christianity became the state religion of three kingdoms, Nobatia, Maqurrah, and Alwah, with capitals near the modern Nile River cities of Wadi Halfa, Marawi, and Khartoum respectively. These endured for 1000 years, withstanding waves of Arab attackers until they fell in the early 1500s, making way for rapid Islamization in the north. Primitive southern tribes were harvested for slaves and remained mostly pagan.¹

During the century of British rule (mid-1800s to 1956), missionaries started schools, hospitals, and churches in the south but not in the north, where the rulers feared inflaming Muslim opposition. Cultural and economic distance between the Arabicized north and Black south increased.²

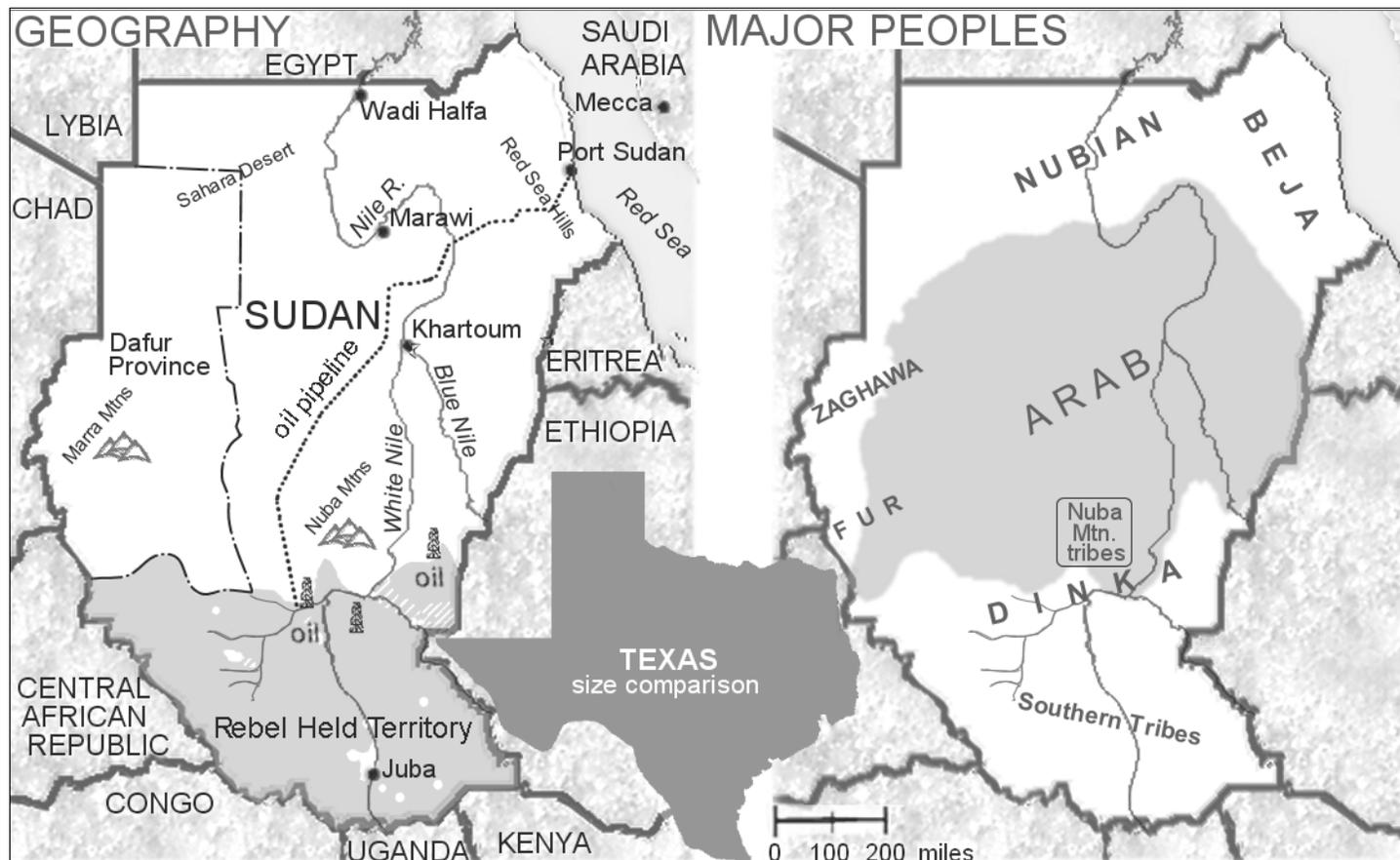
Shortly after gaining independence, civil war ensued. Since then, Sudan has known only eleven years of peace (1972-1983), making this conflict the longest of the 20th century and the costliest in human life since World War II. Since 1983, over two million southern black civilians have been killed and over four million have been displaced.² Following the Missionary Act in 1962 foreign missionaries had to leave.³ In 1989, the central

government mandated *Shari'a* law to be over both the north and the south.⁴ In 1991, the Criminal Act made converting out of Islam a capital offense.²

Genocide and ethnic cleansing are nothing new in Sudan, where white Arab Muslims have been slaughtering, abducting, and enslaving black southern "infidels" for years.⁵ So why the sudden interest in what has been happening in the province of Darfur? The blacks of Darfur are not pagans or Christians. They are Muslims.⁶ When white Arab Muslims are slaughtering black pagans and Christians, world governments don't notice, but when they start slaughtering black Muslims, it is suddenly genocide.⁷

Some 45% of Sudan's thirty million people are either Arabs or have been thoroughly Arabicized. Non-Arabic Muslim groups comprise about another 20% of the population. The major ones are: the Dinka (6%) who dwell along the White and Blue Nile and its major tributaries, the Beja nomads (2%) who roam hills along the Red Sea, the Nubians (1%) along the Nile in the north, and the Fur and the Zaghawa (1%) in the Marra Mountains of Darfur.¹

Over 100 other ethnic groups with distinct languages comprise the remaining 35% of Sudan's population. Two-thirds of these are Christians. One-third follow



traditional tribal religions. Most of these non-Muslims live in the southern third of Sudan. At least forty different languages of both Muslim and Christian peoples are spoken in the centrally located Nuba Mountains. Many Dinka in this southern region are Christians. Arabic serves as a lingua-franca in the north. English serves that purpose in the south.⁶

Total Christians in Sudan number over five million in around 40 denominations. Protestant and Independents are close to one million. Anglicans claim over two million. Roman Catholics have over three million. Four different Orthodox traditions claim several hundred thousand. Nearly two million Christians live as an oppressed minority in the north, many of these as refugees in Khartoum which has a total population of over ten million. Evangelical Christianity is growing at an annual rate of seven percent.⁸ From 1960 to present the ratio of Christians in the war torn south has grown from 5% to 70%.⁹ Over 30 organizations from some 20 countries have missionary, relief, and development work in Sudan.⁸



SUDAN
PROVINCES & POPULATION DENSITY

REFERENCES:

1. *Encyclopedia Britannica*
2. www.family.org/fofmag/sl/a0024079.cfm
3. www.ecoi.net/doc/en/SD/indexfull
4. www.samaritan.org
5. www.uscirf.gov
6. www.ethnologue.com
7. www.nationalreview.com/comment/shear200406300855.asp
8. *Operation World*
9. www.worldangelical.org/persec_sudan_05jun02.html

Ministry Points of Contact

Organization	Ministry	Contact Info
Africa Inland Mission	training church leaders	www.aim-us.org
Association of Christian Resource Organizations Serving Sudan (ACROSS)	evangelism relief & agricultural development	based in Nairobi, Kenya
Campus Crusade for Christ	Dafur emergency relief	www.ccci.org
Food for the Hungry	relief & development	www.fh.org
Frontline Fellowship	advocacy, relief & development evangelism & church support	www.frontline.org.za
In Jesus' Name Ministries	emergency relief	www.injesusname.org
Living Water International	resource development	www.water.cc
MAP International	medical supplies	www.map.org
Persecution Project Foundation	advocacy	www.persecutionproject.org
Presbyterian Church USA	community development	www.pcusa.org
Operation Mobilization	evangelism	www.om.org
Samaritan's Purse	medical care, famine relief & peace advocacy evangelism & church support	www.samaritan.org
South Sudanese Friends International (SSFII)	reconciliation & community development	southsudanfriends.org
WEA Religious Liberty Commission	advocacy	www.worldangelical.org
World Vision	Dafur health care	www.wvi.org
YWAM Mercy Works	emergency relief	www.mercyworks.org