The Gospel of Rutba: New Book Chronicles An Unlikely Good Samaritan In War Torn Iraq

Amid the rubble of what remains of Rutba, a Sunni Muslim town in Iraq which until 3 days before had the only hospital for 195 miles, three Christian peacemakers hover between life and death praying for a miracle. Author Greg Barrett tells the story of the unlikely Good Samaritans who saved the lives of the Americans after the US bombed their town. The town’s only request, tell the world about Rutba.

Washington, DC (PRWEB) June 21, 2012 -- The 2003 ‘Shock and Awe’ bombings of Iraq leveled the only hospital in the Sunni Muslim town of Rutba and for 195 miles as the crow flies. An unfortunate circumstance when, three days later, three American Christian peacemakers were critically injured in a car accident on a desolate stretch of road near a desert hub for Saddam's Ba’athist despot. But that’s only part of the story. In The Gospel of Rutba: War, Peace and The Good Samaritan Story In Iraq (Orbis, June 1, 2012), author Greg Barrett chronicles how the town of Rutba, under heavy attack from the United States, turned the other cheek and cared for the injured Americans: Shane Claiborne, Cliff Kindy and Weldon Nisly. The town’s only request after refusing payment: Go and tell the world about Rutba.

These three peacemakers, Shane, a Christian author-activist and co-founder of Philadelphia’s The Simple Way; Cliff, an organic farmer from Indiana and full-time member of Christian Peacemaker Teams; and Weldon, a Mennonite minister from Seattle, were certainly doing no harm in Iraq. But just as the Pentagon had promised, there was nowhere to hide after they were arrested by police in Baghdad and deported for documenting the destruction of American bombs. As the Christians lay bleeding in Rutba in the back of an Iraqi's station wagon, the driver asked, “Where is the hospital?”

“There is no hospital,” an Iraqi replied, “The Americans bombed the hospital.” Whether through karma, the law of attraction or the golden rule — Do unto others as you would have them do unto you — a Muslim doctor and staff embraced the wounded Americans, human to human and heart to heart, and began treating their bodies and their souls.

“Some Americans were glued to their televisions watching the bombings as if they were firework, yet a town that had just lost its hospital, its children's ward, as well as a father and son who died in the fire, forgave us and treated wounded Americans as if they were their own,” says author Barrett, who returned to Iraq in 2010 with the peacemakers.

Greg Barrett provides a riveting and heartfelt narrative on America’s search for Weapons of Mass Destruction and how the hearts of the people of Rutba were as filled with love as the warehouses were empty. Barrett, a former wire correspondent and the author of The Gospel of Father Joe: Revolutions and Revelations in the Slums of Bangkok (Wiley, 2008) is telling the stories of the unsung Good Samaritans who quietly change the world. He is founding the Good Samaritan Revolution, an online social community that will share stories of people helping each other regardless of religion and nationality. To submit a story of a Good Samaritan visit http://www.facebook.com/TheGospelofRutba.

The Gospel of Rutba: War, Peace and The Good Samaritan Story In Iraq is available now in bookstores and at online retailers, Amazon.com and BarnesandNoble.com. Please visit http://www.thegospelofrutba.com

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