



Written by [Dave Bohon](#) on February 21, 2011

Somali Pirates Hijack Bible Ministry Vessel

Somali thugs have hijacked the yacht of a couple who were in the middle of a sea voyage to take Bibles to other countries. As reported by the Associated Press, the yacht, called the *Quest* (photo, left), was taken on February 18, “two days after a Somali pirate was sentenced to 33 years in prison by a New York court for the 2009 hijacking of the *Maersk Alabama*.” That hijacking came to an abrupt end when Navy snipers killed two pirates holding the ship’s captain.



Aboard the *Quest* were Jean and Scott Adam, a couple from California who has been sailing since 2004 on a mission to distribute Bibles around the world. Another couple was also believed to be with them. On their [website](#) the Adamses noted that they had been distributing Bibles to schools and churches in such locales as the Fiji Islands, Alaska, New Zealand, Central America, and French Polynesia.

They indicated that their latest voyage would take them from India to the Mediterranean by way of the Arabian and Red Seas. They had hoped to reach the island of Crete by April, and then sail to Istanbul. “Djibouti is a big refueling stop,” wrote Jean Adam, a retired dentist, adding that he had no idea “what will happen in these ports, but perhaps we’ll do some local touring. Due north is the Red Sea where we plan to tuck in when winds turn to the north.” Last year, the couple’s yacht had taken them to Myanmar, Cambodia, and Thailand.

“All relevant U.S. agencies are monitoring the situation, working to develop further information, assess options, and possible responses,” said Matt Goshko, a spokesman at the U.S. Embassy in Nairobi, Kenya, as the pirates sailed the yacht toward the Somali coast.

As reported by AP, the pirates “‘are unlikely to hurt the four Americans because they won’t win any ransom money if they do,’ said Graeme Gibbon-Brooks, the head of Dryad Maritime Intelligence. He argued that the pirates would be wise to abandon the yacht because the hijacking threatens their business model, which relies on ransoms from large shipping and insurance companies.”

“They risk the collapse of their business model if they change their status quo and the American government deems that they pose an immediate threat to the safety of American citizens,” Gibbon-Brooks told AP. “They’ve made a mistake and it’s in the Somalis’ business interest to get off the yacht as soon as possible.”

Former Deputy Assistant Secretary of State Steve Ganyard speculated that because the couples aboard the yacht are Americans, the Somali pirates think “they must be rich and able to pay whatever ransom is demanded. However, I think these pirates have made a grave mistake.”



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As the yacht made its way toward the Somali coast, a U.S. Navy ship and helicopters tracked it with the goal of preventing the pirates from making it to shore, where both the pirates and their hostages would likely disappear.

Somalia hasn't had a functioning government since 1991, and pirates have been known to pull in multi-million-dollar ransoms as they capture large, heavily insured cargo ships and crews. According to the [Christian Broadcasting Network](#), "the radical Muslim group al-Shabab, which rules much of the country, is known for targeting Christians in the region. Some African missionaries who have been caught working in the area have paid with their lives."

Currently pirates hold some 30 ships and more than 660 hostages, not counting the two couples aboard the *Quest*.

Some observers have speculated that the Christian faith of Jean and Scott Adam could pose a potential problem for them in a politically unstable environment where radical Islam holds sway. But because a majority of the pirates on the seas around Somalia are not hardline Islamists but economic opportunists who tend to spend their ransoms on alcohol, drugs, and prostitutes, many experts speculate that the couples' cargo of Bibles will not present an ideological conflict with their captors, who are merely looking for a quick payoff.

Meanwhile, the friends of the Adams continued to pray for a quick and safe release for the two couples. "That's our hope," said the Adams' pastor, Father Lloyd Torgerson, "that these great people who are taking this Holy Word and giving it to so many people across this world, that they will somehow return and find safety and come back home."



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